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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [KNNP](#) [IN](#) [UNSC](#)

SUBJECT: KOIZUMI VISIT: LOW-KEY CAP ON A MAJOR MONTH

REF: A. NEW DELHI 3333

[B](#). NEW DELHI 3132

Classified By: PolCouns Geoff Pyatt. Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Japanese PM Junichiro Koizumi's low-key April 28-30 visit to India contrasted sharply with the breathlessness that followed Chinese Premier Wen's visit two weeks earlier. Koizumi and PM Manmohan Singh signed an eight-point program for boosting bilateral relations, particularly in trade and investment and maritime security. In a notable departure from long-standing GOJ policy, the Embassy told us the Japanese did not press New Delhi to sign the NPT, either privately, or publicly. The only reference to the nuclear question in the Joint Statement was a declaration to work as "partners against proliferation," hinting at a Japanese desire to emulate the US approach to this issue. While China was a prominent, if unspoken, factor in the background of discussions, the UNSC was less so. Tokyo's new nuclear line with New Delhi suggests that the two governments are beginning to move away from past tentativeness. End Summary.

PM Singh: "Renew and Reinvigorate"

[1](#)2. (C) Koizumi's India trip came at the end of a month that saw the Secretary, Chinese Premier Wen, and Pakistan's President Musharraf visit New Delhi, all of which factor more prominently in India's strategic calculus than does Japan. While the Koizumi visit did not generate a great deal of public attention, the GOI treated it with characteristic hyperbole. Heralding a "paradigm change in the political ambience of our relations," PM Manmohan Singh announced a new, strategic focus in ties with Japan, while FM Natwar Singh, launching the Indo-Japan Parliamentary Forum, declared the bilateral future "bright." Echoing a Manmohan Singh formulation, the two PMS unveiled their plan to construct an "Arc of Advantage and Prosperity" in Asia, with an eight-point initiative for partnership in a "New Asian Era," building on their five year-old "Global Partnership."

[1](#)3. (SBU) Briefing the diplomatic corps on May 2, Japanese DCM Ryoichi Horie acknowledged that the Global Partnership "catchphrase" was something of a misnomer when it was hatched in 2000, but that the relationship has become "more strategic, more global, and more positive" since then. He repeated the generally vague language of the statement, which calls for a high-level strategic dialogue, annual meetings between PMS, "comprehensive economic engagement," and cooperation on security, UN reform, science and technology, and "global challenges" including terrorism through a new CT joint working group.

Some Things Do Change

[1](#)4. (C) In response to PolCouns' question on the nature of the nuclear proliferation discussions, the Japanese DCM informed us that Koizumi had not raised nuclear issues either publicly or privately, and that GOJ policy was "more realistic now." Rather, he explained, Tokyo and New Delhi agreed to "promote commonalities instead of differences." The joint statement acknowledges their diverging views, calling for "cooperation in a constructive manner." This is a significant departure from long-standing GOJ policy, articulated by Japanese Ambassador Yasukuni Enoki in an interview just prior to Koizumi's arrival: "Japan will continue to call upon India to become a member of the NPT." A variety of senior MEA officials have indicated that New Delhi was pressing hard for Japan to shift away from its ritualistic formulation on the NPT, and will no doubt welcome Tokyo's new characterization of India as a "partner against proliferation."

(Re)Committing to Economic Ties

[1](#)5. (U) Declaring their commitment to a "quantum increase" in trade, point two of India and Japan's eight-part initiative is directed at economic engagement. The PMS agreed to "explore" an economic partnership agreement in addition to their policy dialogue between the Ministry of Commerce and

Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI). Highlighting Japan's ongoing role in infrastructure development in India, including the Delhi metro on which Koizumi took a ride, New Delhi and Tokyo expressed interest in greater Japanese investment in road and rail systems. The PMs also announced cooperation on energy security through an oil and natural gas dialogue. Notably, Koizumi did not follow the pattern of important visitors before him (Putin, Wen) and stop in IT center Bangalore.

#### Maritime Security: Room to Grow

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16. (C) Prior to the visit, the MEA emphasized to us the strategic significance of expanding maritime cooperation from only Coast Guards to include naval exercises as well. Although the Japanese DCM called India Japan's "most reliable naval power west of the Straits of Malacca," he did not foresee more than an exchange of views and friendship visits between the two navies. Unimpressed by bilateral efforts so far, Commodore (ret.) Uday Bhaskar, Director of the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis (IDSA) suggested that India and Japan ought to put more energy into maritime security as "the most viable and appropriate area wherein the India-Japan relationship can be given a strategic orientation."

#### The Chinese Gorilla in the Room

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17. (C) Following so soon after PRC PM Wen's stop in New Delhi, China weighed heavily in discussions of India-Japan relations. Ambassador Enoki said before the visit that Japan needed to prepare for the "reality" of three big countries coexisting in Asia. Elaborating that although his focus was bilateral relations, this was not limited to India and Japan. The Joint Statement explicitly echoed recent comments by Secretary Rice in emphasizing that "a strong, prosperous and

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dynamic India is in the interest of Japan and vice versa," with China as the unspoken impetus. Echoing the same sentiment in sharper terms, the Chairman of the Indo-Japan Chamber of Commerce told a group at FICCI on April 29 that it was "problematic" for Japanese businesses to concentrate their resources in China and that they were looking to diversify to India.

#### UNSC: Unexpectedly Quiet

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18. (C) UNSC reform, which initially promised to figure prominently on the visit agenda, broke no new ground, with an MEA contact telling us that the two sides simply reaffirmed their positions. The Japanese DCM noted that the PMs agreed that the G-4 should remain united and that members should take a decision on Security Council reform before the UNGA in September. Reflecting the new public view after UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's recent comment that new UNSC members were unlikely to have veto privileges (ref A), a May 2 editorial in the "Hindu" criticized New Delhi and Tokyo's UNSC partnership as a "needless distraction" from other more important areas of cooperation, such as trade relations.

#### Comment

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19. (C) Tokyo's new line on the NPT and the increasing use of the word "strategic" in the context of bilateral ties, represent a subtle shift in Tokyo's perception that both stand to gain from adding content to their relationship beyond mutual endorsement for a permanent UNSC seat. While this visit represents a solid step in that direction, if there were less tentativeness in the relationship, and greater economic ballast, there would be more room for New Delhi and Tokyo to coordinate on issues of interest to both governments and the USG.

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